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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Patent No. 7,555,428	:	DECISION
Franz et al.	:	DISMISSING REQUEST FOR
Issue Date: June 30, 2009	:	RECONSIDERATION OF PATENT
Application No. 10/647,203	:	TERM ADJUSTMENT
Filed: August 21, 2003	:	UNDER 37 CFR 1.705
Attorney Docket No.	:	
16113-1230001 / GP-038-00	:	

This is a decision on the "APPLICATION FOR PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.705(d)," filed on August 31, 2009. Patentees request that the Patent Term Adjustment for the above-identified patent be increased by 341 days from 574 days to 915 days.

The request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment is **DISMISSED** with respect to making any change in the patent term adjustment determination under 35 U.S.C. § 154(b) of 574 days.

BACKGROUND

On June 30, 2009, the above-identified application matured into U.S. Patent No. 7,555,428, with a revised Patent Term Adjustment of 574 days. On Monday, August 31, 2009, the subject request for reconsideration was filed.

The Office determined that the 491 days of Office delay pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b) overlaps with the 820 days of Office delay pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1) accorded prior to the filing of the request for continued examination. As such, no additional days of patent term adjustment were entered at issuance under the three-year pendency provision. Given the applicant delay of 246 days, the patent issued with a revised patent term adjustment of 574 (820 - 246) days.

On August 31, 2009, patentees timely submitted this request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment (with required fee), asserting that the correct number of days of Patent Term Adjustment is 915 days under the courts' interpretation of the overlap provision as set forth in Wyeth v. Dudas, 580 F. Supp. 2d 138, 88 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1538 (D.D.C. 2008). Patentees asserts that pursuant to Wyeth, a PTO delay under §154(b)(1)(A) overlaps with a delay under §154(b)(1)(B) only if the delays "occur on the same day." Patentees maintain that the total non-overlapping PTO delay under §154(b)(1)(A) & (B) is 1161 (820 + 492 - 151 overlap) days as these periods do not occur on the same day. Further, given the applicant delay of 246 days, patentees assert entitlement to 915 (1161 - 246) days of patent term adjustment.

OPINION

Patentees' interpretation of the period of overlap has been considered, but found inconsistent with the Office's interpretation of the overlap provision, 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) limits the adjustment of patent term, as follows:

to the extent that the periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in paragraph (1) overlap, the period of any adjustment granted under this subsection shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

As explained in *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004), the Office interprets 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) as permitting either patent

term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv), or patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), but not as permitting patent term adjustment under both 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv) and 154(b)(1)(B). Accordingly, the Office implements the overlap provision as follows:

If an application is entitled to an adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the period of delay under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay overlap under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). Thus, any days of delay for Office issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the filing date of the application, which overlap with the days of patent term adjustment accorded prior to the issuance of the patent will not result in any additional patent term adjustment. See 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), and 37 CFR § 1.703(f). See *Changes to Implement Patent Term Adjustment Under Twenty Year Term; Final Rule*, 65 Fed. Reg. 56366 (Sept. 18, 2000). See also *Revision of Patent Term Extension and Patent Term Adjustment Provisions; Final Rule*, 69 Fed. Reg. 21704 (April 22, 2004), 1282 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 100 (May 18, 2004). See also *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004).

Further, as stated in the *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f) and of the United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, the Office has consistently taken the position that if an application is entitled to an adjustment under the three-year pendency provision of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending before the Office (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application (or, in an international application, the date that the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f), is the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A).

This interpretation is consistent with the statute. Taken together the statute and rule provide that to the extent that periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1) and in corresponding \$1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

In this instance, the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) is the period during which the application was pending before the Office beginning on the application filing date, August 21, 2003, and ending on December 25, 2007, the day before the date of filing of a request for continued examination (RCE) (not including any other periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)). The relevant period ends with the filing of the RCE as the three-year time frame specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) does not include the period subsequent to the filing of the RCE. 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i).

Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1), 820 days of patent term adjustment were accorded during the pendency of the application for Office delay prior to the filing of the request for continued examination. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b), 491 days of patent term adjustment accrued for Office issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the filing date of the application.

The 491 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(b) overlap with the 820 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1). Entry of both the 820 days and the 491 days is neither permitted nor warranted. Considering the applicant delay of 246 days, the correct patent term adjustment is 574 (820 - 246) days.

CONCLUSION

In view thereof, no change will be made in the revised determination of patent term adjustment at the time of the issuance of the patent.

The Office acknowledges submission of the \$200.00 fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.18(e). No additional fees are required.

Telephone inquiries specific to this matter should be directed to Senior Petitions Attorney Douglas I. Wood, at (571) 272-3231.

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